



ΚΥΠΡΙΑΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
ΥΠΟΥΡΓΕΙΟ ΥΓΕΙΑΣ

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ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΕΣ ΔΗΜΟΣΙΑΣ ΥΓΕΙΑΣ
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Instructions for persons self-isolating at home as close contacts of COVID-19 positive cases

The person evaluated as a close contact of a confirmed case is considered to be a suspected case and will have to follow the instructions given by the Ministry of health, otherwise there is legal liability for violation of the Quarantine Law. Compliance with measures of personal protection and distancing is required for breaking the chain of transmission, as after a close contact with a confirmed case, a person can transmit the SARS-CoV-2 virus to their environment.

Close contacts are determined as follows:

- a) A person living together with a confirmed positive case
- b) A person who had direct physical contact with a confirmed positive case (e.g. handshake, game)
- c) A person who had unprotected contact with infectious secretions of a confirmed positive case
- d) A person who had face to face contact with a confirmed positive case at a distance of less than 2 metres and for a duration of more than 15 minutes
- e) A person who was in an enclosed space (e.g. classroom, cinema, hospital waiting rooms, vehicle etc.) with a confirmed positive case for more than 15 minutes and at a distance of less than 2 metres
- f) A healthcare professional or other person who provided healthcare to a positive COVID-19 case, or laboratory personnel who handled a sample of a confirmed positive case without using appropriate protective equipment or if there was a breach in its integrity
- g) A fellow traveller on an aircraft/bus sitting up to two rows (in each direction) from a confirmed case, persons travelling together or caring for a patient, crewmembers who served the part of the plane where the patient was seated (possibly all the passengers in the same part of the plane and even all passengers on the flight can be considered as close contacts, if there is more extensive exposure, due to the patient's serious symptoms and his/her movement on board the aircraft)



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What applies in each case of close contact for social self-isolation and testing policies:

VACCINATION/RECOVERY	NEED FOR SELF ISOLATION*	EXAMINATION
Booster dose Into effect same day of vaccination	NO Provided that measures of personal protection (mask, hand hygiene, distancing from other persons, reduction in contact, self-monitoring for symptoms)	RECOMMENDATION Rapid test on the 3 rd , 5th and 7th day of contact with confirmed case that will be provided free of charge ** or in any private laboratory or pharmacy with own expenses <u>AND</u> a PCR or Rapid test on day 7 of exposure with own expenses
Full vaccination with any vaccine recognized by the Republic of Cyprus (2 doses of vaccine or 1 dose of single-dose vaccine + 14 days) with time less than 7 months elapsed since the last dose. Minors are excluded for the 7-month period.	NO Provided that measures of personal protection (mask, hand hygiene, distancing from other persons, reduction in contact, self-monitoring for symptoms)	OBLIGATION Rapid test on the 3rd and 5th day of contact with confirmed case that will be provided free of charge ** or in any private laboratory or pharmacy with own expenses RECOMMENDATION PCR or Rapid test on day 7 of exposure with own expenses
Persons diagnosed or who have gone through illness as positive cases through PCR or Rapid Test with time elapsed <u>no longer than 90 days since their positive test</u>	NO Provided that measures of personal protection (mask, hand hygiene, distancing from other persons, reduction in contact, self-monitoring for symptoms)	OBLIGATION Rapid test on the 3rd and 5th day of contact with confirmed case that will be provided free of charge ** or in any private laboratory or pharmacy with own expenses RECOMMENDATION PCR or Rapid test on day 7 of exposure with own expenses
Full vaccination with any vaccine recognized by the Republic of Cyprus (2 doses of vaccine or 1 dose of single-dose vaccine + 14 days) with time greater than 7 months elapsed since the last dose. Minors are excluded for the 7-month period. They follow the full vaccinated protocol.	YES For 10 days after contact with positive case. Discharge earlier than 10 days can be done with a PCR or Rapid test*** (with negative result) on the 7 th day since contact or later, with the cost paid by the affected person.	OBLIGATION Rapid test on the 3rd and 5th day of contact with confirmed case that will be provided free of charge ** they can not perform any private laboratory or pharmacy test because they should be isolated
Persons with no prior vaccination or illness certificate or incomplete vaccination (eg. one out of two doses of vaccination)	YES For 10 days after contact with positive case. Discharge earlier than 10 days can be done with a PCR or Rapid test*** (with negative result) on the 7 th day since	OBLIGATION Rapid test on the 3rd and 5th day of contact with confirmed case that will be provided free of charge ** they can not perform any private laboratory or pharmacy test because they should be isolated



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	contact or later, with the cost paid by the affected person.	
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For verification of the above, Cyprus Police may ask for vaccination certificates or certificates of discharge.

Important notes:

Close contact in school units is defined by a relevant bulletin by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Youth and it is the responsibility of the school Administration to report close contacts. A close contact in the workplace is reported by the Safety and Health Officer of the business.

*Students can be excluded from self-isolation ONLY for educational purposes in order to physically attend to school according to self-to-stay measure. This measure can be use in other settings ONLY for physical attendance to specific work places that are going to be announced at the official press releases by the ministry of health (<https://www.pio.gov.cy/coronavirus/categories/press>)

For Health professionals working in Hospital Units, the instructions for returning to work may be modified under conditions set by the Infection Control Committee of the Hospital.

For people leaving or working in nursing homes they must follow a specific protocol.

**The scheduling for free rapid test on the 3rd and 5th day of the contact is done by the Ministry of Health, and the person reported as “close contact” is notified by text message (sms) of the place and time of sampling, at predetermined locations. At these locations, the “close contact” must display the sms that identifies them as close contact, and should then provide the code sent to them, along with proof of identification (identity card, passport or ARC). In order for a “close contact” to receive an sms with an appointment, the “positive case” must have declared their contacts through the relevant electronic platform, or by filling and sending back the excel file they received. It is noted that if the 3rd day of contact has passed, only the 5th day test will be scheduled, while if the 5th day has passed, then no appointment will be scheduled, and the contact will have to find an alternative route for testing, at their own expense.

For children under 6 years old, a free PCR test will be scheduled by telephone appointment from the Coordination of Public Health Clinics in their province of residence.

*** Health professionals working in public or private Hospital Units or nursing homes are excluded from the choice between PCR and Rapid test to be released on day 7th of exposure. They should only do a PCR with own expenses on the seventh day of exposure in order to return to their working routine.



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For all the above categories of close contacts, it is noted that once onset of symptoms consistent with COVID-19 is observed, they should contact their Personal Doctor for evaluation and their PD will schedule a free PCR test through Public Health Clinics if needed.

For close contacts classified as contacts of a variant of concern, guidelines may be modified. These persons will be contacted by telephone from a public officer for any changes in procedure.

Persons required to self-isolate may do so at their place of residence as defined below. In case the below cannot be applied, there is providence in place for quarantine – at an additional cost borne by the affected person – in a specified quarantine hotel. This can be arranged by telephone at 00357 24 846600 (this cost is borne completely by the Deputy Ministry of Tourism, if the close contact was a passenger on the same aircraft as a positive case and was contacted by telephone for instructions by an officer of the Ministry of Health). In each case, self-isolating in any hotel other than that specified is **forbidden** due to risk of transmission. Private stay must be arranged, or transportation of the close contact to the specified hotel.

Guidelines for self-isolating at home

- Ideally, the person must be alone at home. If this is not feasible, the suspected case must isolate in a room which is under no circumstances used by other inhabitants of the residence. If there are other suspected or confirmed positive cases in the house, they should self-isolate separately.
- The room used by a suspected case must be adequately ventilated.
- Leaving the home is not permitted¹.
- Visits are not permitted.
- The use of separate house appliances is recommended. If this is not possible, then disinfection must be carried out after each use with common detergent or soap, followed by rinsing and drying.
- The use of a separate bathroom and toilet is recommended. If this is not feasible, then disinfection must be carried out according to the guidelines of the health services (https://www.pio.gov.cy/coronavirus/pdf/4_3.pdf).
- Any planned trips prior to the discharge date are NOT allowed. Exemption can only be granted in the event that the permanent address of residence is abroad, always in coordination with the Epidemiological Surveillance Unit for briefing and instructions, requiring a negative PCR test with sampling less than 48 hours prior to departure and under the condition that the person does not present with symptoms.
- Transportation is allowed ONLY in the case of a medical emergency and following communication with the Personal Doctor or at 1420. Where possible, transportation must be carried out without escort and only by private vehicle (not by bus or taxi).



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- Until the end of the home self-isolation period, waste must be placed in a double disposal bag and kept for 72 hours in a place separate than the specified collection point. After 72 hours have passed they can be placed at the regular collection point.
- If a suspected case is under the age of 15 or is a person requiring assistance who cannot care for themselves, then a parent/guardian/carer can self-isolate with them to care for them and also request special leave. For the person choosing to self-isolate with the suspected case, the same instructions of self-isolation apply for distancing in the home from other residents and the greater environment, as with the suspected case.
- The only exemption for lifting of self-isolation is for examination visits at Public Health Clinics.
- No close contact is permitted to stay at any hotel other than those specified by the Deputy Ministry of Tourism. Private residence will need to be arranged, or transportation to a specified hotel.

Follow up briefing/ Sampling/ Discharge

- The period of self-isolation is set at 10 days. The person defined as close contact can be released from quarantine earlier than 10 days, provided they get a PCR or Rapid test*** at an accredited laboratory on the 7th day since contact with a confirmed positive case or later (counting the date of contact as day zero) and with a negative result. *The negative PCR test must be sent by email to contacttracing3@moh.gov.cy.*
- The start of quarantine is set as the last **day of contact** with a positive case and **not** from the day of notification. The day of contact is set as day zero and the days of self-isolation begin to count from the following day.
- In the event that **close contacts are unable to isolate from a positive case** (eg. parents minding an underage child, carers assisting persons who are unable to care for themselves, etc) **then the last day of contact (day zero) is the day of release of the positive case, since, until the last day prior to release, a positive case is potentially transmissible and the days of self-isolation are reset.**
- In the event that a person has been declared as a contact to a positive case, an officer of the Coordination of Public Health Clinics will contact the suspected case by telephone within a few days for briefing as to testing. Instructions will be given over the phone for the place and means of transportation. From the contact tracing procedure, each close contact is allocated **one** free test.
- Test result will be sent by text message (sms) within 72 hours.
- If the person declared as a close contact is not called for testing, or does not wish to get tested, they can resume activities 14 days after the last contact with a positive case, provided they do not present with symptoms.



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- Quarantine is automatically lifted once the self-isolation period has elapsed, with no further notification.

Personal Doctor

- The Personal Doctor does not need to be notified immediately, except in the event of symptoms onset. Then the doctor can schedule further testing if deemed necessary.
- Self-monitoring of body temperature is recommended.
- In the event of non-registration to a Personal Doctor, immediate registration is recommended. If this is not feasible, the person can call the 24hour hotline 1420 line for symptoms report and evaluation.

Special leave

- Provisions are in place for special leave given by the Ministry of Health to people classified as close contacts with a positive case. The relevant file is attached (on the last page), but can also be filled electronically as follows:
 1. On the website <https://www.pio.gov.cy/coronavirus/eng>, tab Information Guidelines, tab Guidelines for persons in isolation, the *Application for the issuance of an absence from work Certificate for Public Health Reasons* form can be found.
 2. The form must be filled and sent **after the quarantine period** by fax (22771496) or through email (cycomnet1@cytanet.com.cy), as written on the form. The certificate will be sent back in the same way.
 3. The *Application for the issuance of an absence from work Certificate for Public Health Reasons* form, issued by the Ministry of Health, must be submitted to the Employer or to the Social Insurance Services.

For general information, call 1474 (08:00-20:00).

For any additional information to declare close contacts and clarifications on the tracing process, contact the Tracing Team on the following numbers: 22771923, 22514264, 22514258, 22514259, or by email to contacttracing2@moh.gov.cy (Monday-Sunday 08:00-00:00).

To report symptoms, call your Personal Doctor or 1420 (24 hours).

¹ *Self-isolation at home may be monitored either through on-site or telephone checks. Persons self-isolating at home are mandated to abide by the relevant decree. In case of non-compliance, they will be held legally liable.*

Medical Services and Public Health Services
Ministry of Health
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